

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Platte Community School District Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2006-2007

Team Members: Chris Sargent, Rita Pettigrew, Education Specialists and Dan Rounds, Transition Liaison

Dates of On Site Visit: January 10, 2007

Date of Report: January 22, 2007

This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

Promising Practice	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
Meets Requirements	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
Needs Assistance	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement and is out of compliance.
Needs Intervention	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement and is out of compliance.
Not applicable	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

Principle 1 – General Supervision

General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Student progress data

- Surveys
- Private school information
- Local Education Association (LEA) flow through funds request information
- Information on home school students
- Comprehensive plan
- Comprehensive system of personnel development plan
- District annual needs assessment
- Teacher Assistance Team (TAT): referral vs. non referral information
- Needs assessment information (such as personnel, facilities, etc)
- Personnel training
- Budget information
- Screening

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the Platte School District has an established and effective child find system in place that includes all children ages birth to 21. The district utilizes an effective pre-referral and referral system. Pre-referral meetings are being conducted.

The Platte School District follows the state and federal regulations and guidelines related to the provision of services to students enrolled in private schools. The district comprehensive plan reflects policies consistent with Special Education Programs performance goals and indicators. The district reviews/analyzes discipline data and revises policies/procedures if significant discrepancies are occurring between the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for children with and without disabilities.

The Platte School District meets requirements in the area of qualified personnel and in the area of professional development.

Needs improvement

The steering committee concluded that referrals were not documented appropriately. This problem has been addressed and documentation in place for all initial referrals.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting requirements under general supervision as concluded by the steering committee. Referral documentation was available for students initially referred for special education and therefore meets requirements.

Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3rd

birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Numbers of children screened
- Preschool age
- School-age
- Age at referral
- Student progress data
- Personnel development information
- Number of referrals that do not result in evaluation
- District records of release to outside agencies
- Needs assessment information
- Personnel training
- Budget information

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the district provides a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all eligible children with disabilities. The Platte School District has not had any suspensions or expulsions of students with disabilities in the past 3 years.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting requirements under free appropriate public education as concluded by the steering committee.

Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Teacher file reviews
- Exit and re-entry into special education
- Number of placement committee overrides
- Surveys
- General curriculum information
- Comprehensive plan
- Initial referral log

- Needs assessment information
- Personnel training
- Budget information

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded that appropriate written notice and informed consent is obtained before assessments are administered as part of an evaluation or re-evaluation. The district ensures the proper identification of students with disabilities through the evaluation process. Reevaluations are conducted in accordance with all procedural requirements to ensure students are appropriately evaluated for continuing eligibility.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting requirements under evaluation procedures as concluded by the steering committee with the exception of the item listed below.

Needs assistance

ARSD 24:05:25:04. Evaluation procedures.

School districts shall ensure, at a minimum, that evaluation procedures include the following:

(7) The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, as applicable, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities.

Through a review of student records, a student identified of the 2005 child count as a student with traumatic brain injury (TBI) was reevaluated to determine continued eligibility. When reevaluated in February of 2006, the student was evaluated and determined eligible as a student with a specific learning disability (SLD). The areas of eligibility were reading, oral expression and math. The student is receiving Occupational Therapy (OT) as a related service. There is no connection between the student's areas of disability and the need for OT services. The district needs to review evaluation data and determine if the student has been evaluated in all areas of suspected disability/category of disability and if the OT services are necessary for the student to benefit from their special education program.

Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Teacher file reviews

- Surveys
- Comprehensive plan
- Parental rights document
- Consent and prior notice forms
- Needs assessment information
- Public awareness information
- Family Education Right and Privacy Act (FERPA) disclosure
- Review of access logs
- Personnel training
- Budget information

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the Platte School District ensures parents are informed of their parental rights under IDEA in their native language or another mode of communication. Parents are provided the opportunity to inspect and review all educational records concerning the identification, evaluation, educational placement and the provision of a free appropriate public education. The rights of a child are protected if no parent can be identified. The district has policies and procedures in place for responding to complaint and due process actions that ensure compliance.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with the areas identified as meeting requirements under procedural safeguards as concluded by the steering committee.

Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Teacher file reviews
- Student progress data
- Personnel development information
- Needs assessment information
- Personnel training
- Budget information

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the Platte School District ensures that written notice is provided for all IEP meetings and includes all required content. The IEP

team is comprised of appropriate team membership and meets all identified responsibilities. The district ensures that IEPs contain all required content and that transition plans for students are a coordinated set of activities which meet the state/ federal guidelines to prepare students for post school activities. The Platte School District has policies and procedures in place to ensure that an IEP is in effect for each eligible student.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting requirements under individual education program as concluded by the steering committee with the exceptions of the issues noted below.

Needs assistance

ARSD 24:05:27:01.03 Content of individualized education program (IEP) **Present level of academic achievement and functional performance and** **annual goals**

A student's IEP must contain present levels of academic achievement and functional performance based upon the skill areas affected by the student's identified disability. The present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFPs) are based upon the functional assessment information gathered during the comprehensive evaluation process.

The monitoring team found student files lacked the required content in the PLAAFPs (i.e. specific skill area(s) affected by the student's disability including transition, strengths and needs). File reviews indicated functional assessments are not completed to acquire the skill-based information needed to develop present levels of academic achievement and functional performance for students eligible for special education services. Skill-based information available in some functional assessment reports was not used in the PLAAFP and therefore did not link to the annual goals. Annual goals did not consistently specify skills the student could reasonably accomplish within a 12 month period. For example, "will complete reading comprehension activities..." and will apply strategies to retrieve, interpret and evaluate ideas/information that will enhance the ability to listen critically and respond appropriately to other social and academic situations..."

ARSD 24:05:27:01.03 Content of individualized education program (IEP)

A student's IEP must contain a statement of the student's special education and related services provided to the student. The student's IEP must also indicate the location of those services.

CFR 300.320 (a)(7) Comment Initiation, Frequency, Location and Duration of Services

What is required is that the IEP include information about the amount of services that will be provided to the child, so that the level of the agency's commitment of resources will be clear to parents and other IEP team members. The amount of time to be committed to each the various services to be provided must be appropriate to the specific service and clearly state in the IEP in a manner that can be understood by all involved into the development and implementation the IEP.

Through interview and a review of student records, the monitoring team concluded the district did not specifically state the various services to be provided or the specific services to be provided in the IEP. The IEPs simply stated "special education services" along with a total amount of time and location.

34 CFR 300.320 Definition of individual education program.

Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and undated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include:

(2) The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching their goals.

Through interview and a review of student record the course of study did not consistently align to the measurable post-secondary goals of the student. Specific classes and/or electives required by the student need to be specified within the course of study through the 12th grade.

Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- File reviews
- Parent, Student, General educator surveys
- General curriculum information
- Age at Placement
- Needs assessment information
- Personnel training
- Budget information

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded that children in the Platte School District receive services in the least restrictive environment with the support they need for their successful participation.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified under least restrictive environment as concluded by the steering committee.